POEMS OF POWER

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BY

ELLA WHEELER WILCOX

EVERYDAY THOUGHTS

KINGDOM OF LOVE AND OTHER POEMS

THREE WOMEN

MAURINE

POEMS OF PASSION

POEMS OF PLEASURE

THE BEAUTIFUL LAND OF NOD

AN ERRING WOMAN'S LOVE

AN AMBITIOUS MAN

MEN, WOMEN AND EMOTIONS

Ella Wheeler Wilcox

CLOSED COLLECTION

POEMS OF POWER

BY

ELLA WHEELER WILCOX

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Preface Note

THE final word in the title of this volume refers to the Divine Power in every human being, the recognition of which is the secret to all success and happiness. It is this idea which many of the verses endeavor to illustrate.

THE AUTHOR

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THE MEETING OF THE CENTURIES.

A CURIOUS vision, on mine eyes unfurled
In the deep night. I saw, or seemed to see,
Two Centuries meet, and sit down vis-a-vis,
Across the great round table of the world.
One with suggested sorrows in his mien
And on his brow the furrowed lines of thought.
And one whose glad expectant presence brought
A glow and radiance from the realms unseen.

Hand clasped with hand, in silence for a space,
The Centuries sat; the sad old eyes of one
(As grave paternal eyes regard a son)
Gazing upon that other eager face.
And then a voice, as cadenceless and gray
As the sea's monody in winter time,
Mingled with tones melodious, as the chime
Of bird choirs, singing in the dawns of May.

THE OLD CENTURY SPEAKS:

By you, Hope stands. With me, Experience walks.
Like a fair jewel in a faded box,
In my tear-rusted heart, sweet pity lies.
For all the dreams that look forth from your eyes,

And those bright-hued ambitions, which I know
Must fall like leaves and perish in Time's snow,
(Even as my soul's garden stands bereft,)
I give you pity! 'tis the one gift left.

THE NEW CENTURY:

Nay, nay, good friend! not pity, but Godspeed,
Here in the morning of my life I need.
Counsel, and not condolence; smiles, not tears,
To guide me through the channels of the years.
Oh, I am blinded by the blaze of light
That shines upon me from the Infinite.
Blurred is my vision by the close approach
To unseen shores, whereon the times encroach.

THE OLD CENTURY:

Illusion, all illusion. List and hear
The Godless cannons, booming far and near.
Flaunting the flag of Unbelief, with Greed
For pilot, lo! the pirate age in speed
Bears on to ruin. War's most hideous crimes
Besmirch the record of these modern times.
Degenerate is the world I leave to you,—
My happiest speech to earth will be—adieu.

THE NEW CENTURY:

You speak as one too weary to be just.
I hear the guns—I see the greed and lust.
The death throes of a giant evil fill

The air with riot and confusion. Ill
Ofttimes makes fallow ground for Good; and Wrong
Builds Right's foundation, when it grows too strong.
Pregnant with promise is the hour, and grand
The trust you leave in my all-willing hand.

THE OLD CENTURY:

As one who throws a flickering taper's ray
To light departing feet, my shadowed way
You brighten with your faith. Faith makes the man.
Alas, that my poor foolish age outran
Its early trust in God. The death of art
And progress follows, when the world's hard heart
Casts out religion. 'Tis the human brain
Men worship now, and heaven, to them, means—
gain.

THE NEW CENTURY:

Faith is not dead, tho' priest and creed may pass,
For thought has leavened the whole unthinking
mass.
And man looks now to find the God within.
We shall talk more of love, and less of sin,
In this new era. We are drawing near
Unatlassed boundaries of a larger sphere.
With awe, I wait, till Science leads us on,
Into the full effulgence of its dawn.

DEATH HAS CROWNED HIM A MARTYR.

(Written on the day of President McKinley's death.)

IN the midst of sunny waters, lo! the mighty Ship of State
Staggers, bruised and torn and wounded by a derelict of fate.
One that drifted from its moorings in the anchorage of hate.

On the deck our noble Pilot, in the glory of his prime,
Lies in woe-impelling silence, dead before his hour or time,
Victim of a mind self-centered in a Godless fool of crime.

One of earth's dissension-breeders, one of Hate's unreasoning tools
In the annals of the ages, when the world's hot anger cools,
He who sought for Crime's distinction shall be known as Chief of Fools.

In the annals of the ages, he who had no thought of fame
(Keeping on the path of duty, caring not for praise or blame),

Close beside the deathless Lincoln, writ in light, will shine his name.

Youth proclaimed him as a hero; time, a statesman; love, a man;
Death has crowned him as a martyr, so from goal to goal he ran,
Knowing all the sum of glory that a human life may span.

He was chosen by the people; not an accident of birth
Made him ruler of a nation, but his own intrinsic worth.
Fools may govern over kingdoms—not republics of the earth.

He has raised the lovers' standard by his loyalty and faith,
He has shown how virile manhood may keep free from scandal's breath.
He has gazed, with trust unshaken, in the awful eyes of death.

In the mighty march of progress he has sought to do his best.
Let his enemies be silent, as we lay him down to rest,
And may God assuage the anguish of one suffering woman's breast.

GRIEF.

As the funeral train with its honored dead
On its mournful way went sweeping,
While a sorrowful nation bowed its head
And the whole world joined in weeping,
I thought, as I looked on the solemn sight,
Of the one fond heart despairing,
And I said to myself, as in truth I might,
"How sad must be this *sharing*."

To share the living with even Fame,
For a heart that is only human,
Is hard, when Glory asserts her claim
Like a bold, insistent woman;
Yet a great, grand passion can put aside
Or stay each selfish emotion,
And watch, with a pleasure that springs from pride,
Its rival—the world's devotion.

But Death should render to love its own,
And my heart bowed down and sorrowed
For the stricken woman who wept alone
While even her *dead* was borrowed;
Borrowed from her, the bride—the wife—
For the world's last martial honor,
As she sat in the gloom of her darkened life,
With her widow's grief fresh upon her.

He had shed the glory of Love and Fame
  In a golden halo about her;
She had shared his triumphs and worn his name:
  But, alas! he had died without her.
He had wandered in many a distant realm,
  And never had left her behind him;
But now, with a spectral shape at the helm,
  He had sailed where she could not find him.

It was only a thought, that came that day
  In the midst of the muffled drumming
And funeral music and sad display,
  That I knew was right and becoming;
Only a thought as the mourning train
  Moved, column after column,
Bearing the dead to the burial plain
  With a reverence grand as solemn.

SPEECH.

TALK happiness. The world is sad enough
Without your woe. No path is wholly rough.
Look for the places that are smooth and clear,
And speak of them to rest the weary ear
Of earth; so hurt by one continuous strain
Of mortal discontent and grief and pain.

Talk faith. The world is better off without
Your uttered ignorance and morbid doubt.
If you have faith in God, or man, or self,
Say so; if not, push back upon the shelf
Of silence, all your thoughts till faith shall come.
No one will grieve because your lips are dumb.

Talk health. The dreary, never-ending tale
Of mortal maladies is worn and stale;
You cannot charm or interest or please
By harping on that minor chord, disease.
Say you are well, or all is well with you,
And God shall hear your words and make them true.

ILLUSION.

GOD and I in space alone
And nobody else in view.
"And where are the people, O! Lord," I said,
"The earth below, and the sky o'er head
And the dead whom once I knew?"

"That was a dream," God smiled and said,
"A dream that seemed to be true.
There were no people, living or dead,
There was no earth, and no sky o'er head
There was only myself—in you."

"Why do I feel no fear," I asked,
"Meeting you here this way,
For I have sinned I know full well,
And is there heaven, and is there hell,
And is this the judgment day?"

"Say, those were but dreams," the Great God said,
"Dreams, that have ceased to be.
There are no such things as fear or sin,
There is no you—you never have been—
There is nothing at all but *Me*."

ASSERTION.

I AM serenity. Though passions beat
Like mighty billows on my helpless heart,
I know beyond them, lies the perfect sweet
Serenity, which patience can impart.
And when wild tempests in my bosom rage,
"Peace, peace," I cry, "it is my heritage."

I am good health. Though fevers rack my brain
And rude disorders mutilate my strength,
A perfect restoration after pain,
I know shall be my recompense at length,
And so through grievous day and sleepless night
"Health, health," I cry, "it is my own by right."

I am success. Though hungry, cold, ill-clad,
I wander for awhile, I smile and say,
"It is but for a time—I shall be glad
To-morrow, for good fortune comes my way.
God is my father, He has wealth untold,
His wealth is mine, health, happiness and gold."

THE QUEEN'S LAST RIDE.

(Written on the day of Queen Victoria's funeral ceremonies in London.)

THE Queen is taking a drive to-day,
They have hung with purple the carriage-way,
They have dressed with purple the royal track
Where the Queen goes forth and never comes back.

Let no man labour as she goes by
On her last appearance to mortal eye,
With heads uncovered let all men wait
For the Queen to pass, in her regal state.

Army and Navy shall lead the way
For that wonderful coach of the Queen's to-day.
Kings and Princes and Lords of the land
Shall ride behind her, a humble band,
And over the city and over the world
Shall the Flags of all Nations be half-mast-furled,
For the silent lady of royal birth
Who is riding away from the Courts of earth;
Riding away from the world's unrest
To a mystical goal, on a secret quest.

Tho' in royal splendour she drives through town,
Her robes are simple, she wears no crown:

And yet she wears one, for widowed no more,
She is crowned with the love that has gone before,
And crowned with the love she has left behind
In the hidden depths of each mourner's mind.

Bow low your heads—lift your hearts on high—
The Queen in silence is driving by!

I AM.

I KNOW not whence I came,
I know not whither I go;
But the fact stands clear that I am here
In this world of pleasure and woe.
And out of the mist and murk
Another truth shines plain—
It is my power each day and hour
To add to its joy or its pain.

I know that the earth exists,
It is none of my business why;
I cannot find out what it's all about,
I would but waste time to try.
My life is a brief, brief thing,
I am here for a little space,
And while I stay I would like, if I may,
To brighten and better the place.

The trouble, I think, with us all
Is the lack of a high conceit.
If each man thought he was sent to this spot
To make it a bit more sweet,
How soon we could gladden the world,
How easily right all wrong,

If nobody shirked, and each one worked
To help his fellows along.

Cease wondering why you came—
Stop looking for faults and flaws.
Rise up to-day in your pride and say,
"I am part of the First Great Cause!
However full the world,
There is room for an earnest man.
It had need of me or I would not be—
I am here to strengthen the plan."

WOMAN AND WAR.

WE women teach our little sons how wrong
And how ignoble blows are; school and church
Support our precepts, and inoculate
The growing minds with thoughts of love and peace.
"Let dogs delight to bark and bite," we say;
But human beings with immortal souls
Must rise above the methods of a brute,
And walk with reason and with self-control.

And then—dear God! you men, you wise, strong men,
Our self-announced superiors in brain,
Our peers in judgment, you go forth to war!
You leap at one another, mutilate
And starve and kill your fellow-men, and ask
The world's applause for such heroic deeds.
You boast and strut; and if no song is sung,
No laudatory epic writ in blood,
Telling how many widows you have made,
Why then, perforce, you say our bards are dead
And inspiration sleeps to wake no more.
And we, the women, we whose lives you are—

What can we do but sit in silent homes,
And wait and suffer? Not for us the blare

Of trumpets and the bugle's call to arms—
For us no waving banners, no supreme
Triumphant hour of conquest. Ours the slow
Dread torture of uncertainty, each day
The bootless battle with the same despair,
And when at best your victories reach our ears,
There reaches with them, to our pitying hearts,
The thought of countless homes made desolate,
And other women weeping for their dead.

O men, wise men, superior beings, say,
Is there no substitute for war in this
Great age and era! If you answer "No,"
Then let us rear our children to be wolves,
And teach them from the cradle how to kill.
Why should we women waste our time and words
In talking peace, when men declare for war?

A FALLEN LEAF.

A TRUSTING little leaf of green,
A bold, audacious frost;
A rendezvous, a kiss or two
And youth forever lost.
Ah, me!
The bitter, bitter cost.

A flaunting patch of vivid red,
That quivers in the sun;
A windy gust, a grave of dust,
The little race is run.
Ah, me!
Were that the only one.

"THIS TOO SHALL PASS AWAY."

A MIGHTY monarch in the days of old
Made offer of high honour, wealth and gold,

To one who should produce in form concise
A motto for his guidance, terse yet wise—

A precept, soothing in his hours forlorn,
Yet one that in his prosperous days would warn.

Many the maxims sent the king, men say.
The one he chose: "*This too shall pass away.*"

Oh, jewel sentence from the mine of truth!
What riches it contains for age or youth.

No stately epic, measured and sublime,
So comforts, or so counsels, for all time

As these few words. Go write them on your heart
And make them of your daily life a part.

Has some misfortune fallen to your lot?
This too will pass away—absorb the thought,

And wait; your waiting will not be in vain,
Time gilds with gold the iron links of pain.

The dark to-day leads into light to-morrow;
There is no endless joy, no endless sorrow.

Are you upon earth's heights? No cloud in view?
Go read your motto once again: *This too*

Shall pass away; fame, glory, place and power,
They are but little baubles of the hour,

Flung by the ruthless years down in the dust.
Take warning and be worthy of God's trust.

Use well your prowess while it lasts; leave bloom,
Not blight, to mark your footprints to the tomb.

The truest greatness lies in being kind,
The truest wisdom in a happy mind.

He who desponds, his Maker's judgment mocks;
The gloomy Christian is a paradox.

Only the sunny soul respects its God.
Since life is short we need to make it broad;

Since life is brief we need to make it bright.
Then keep the old king's motto well in sight,

And let its meaning permeate each day.
Whatever comes, *This too shall pass away.*

SUCCESS.

NO mortal yet has measured his full force.
It is a river rising in God's thought
And emptying in the soul of man. Go back,
Back to the Source, and find divinity.
Forget the narrow borders, and ignore
The rocks and chasms which obstruct the way.
Remember the beginning. Man may be
And do the thing he wishes if he keeps
That one thought dominant through night and day,
And knows his strength is limitless because
Its Fountainhead is God. That mighty stream
Shall bear upon its breast, like golden fleets,
His hopes, his efforts and his purposes,
To anchor in the harbor of Success.

RECRIMINATION.

I.

SAID Life to Death, "Methinks if I were you
I would not carry such an awesome face
To terrify the helpless human race.
And if, indeed, those wondrous tales be true
Of happiness beyond, and if I knew
About the boasted blessings of that place,
I would not hide so miserly all trace
Of my vast knowledge, Death, if I were you.
But like a glorious angel I would lean
Above the pathway of each sorrowing soul,
Hope in my eyes, and comfort in my breath,
And strong conviction in my radiant mien,
The while I whispered of that beauteous goal.
This would I do, if I were you, O Death!"

II.

Said Death to Life, "If I were you, my friend,
I would not lure confiding souls each day
With fair false smiles, to enter on a way
So filled with pain and trouble to the end.
I would not tempt those whom I should defend,
Nor stand unmoved and see them go astray.
Nor would I force unwilling souls to stay

Who longed for freedom, were I you, my friend.
But like a tender mother I would take
The weary world upon my sheltering breast
And wipe away its tears, and soothe its strife.
I would fulfill my promises, and make
My children bless me as they sank to rest,
Where now they curse—if I were you, O Life!"

III.

Life made no answer; and Death spoke again:
"I would not woo from God's sweet nothingness
A soul to being, if I could not bless
And crown it with all joy. If unto men
My face seems awesome, tell me, Life, why then
Do they pursue me, mad for my caress,
Believing in my silence lies redress
For your loud falsehoods? (So Death spoke again.)
Oh, it is well for you I am not fair,
Well that I hide behind a voiceless tomb
The mighty secrets of that other place.
Else would you stand in impotent despair
While unfledged souls straight from the mother
womb
Rushed to my arms, and spat upon your face."

THREEFOLD.

I.

OUR love wakes with the morning, unafraid
To meet the little worries of the day.
And if a haggard dawn, dull eyed and gray,
Peers in upon us through the window shade,
Full soon love's finger, rosy tipped, is laid
Upon its brow, and gloom departs straightway.
All outer darkness melts before that ray
Of inner light, whereof our love is made,
Each petty trouble and each pigmy care
And those gaunt visaged duties which so fill
Life's path by day, do borrow of love's grace.
Though he be dear alway, and debonaire
In the bright morning best he proves his skill
Lending his lustre to the Commonplace.

II.

Our love looks boldly in the moon's bold eyes.
He has no thing to hide, no thing to fear.
And if the world stands far or hurtles near
He walks alway, serene, without disguise,
Naked and not ashamed beneath the skies.
He does not need dark backgrounds to appear
Radiant, for even through the broad day's clear

Effulgence his supernal beauties rise.
Oh, there be loves that hide till day is done:
Nocturnal loves, like silent birds of prey:
Secretive loves that do not dare rejoice.
Ours is an eagle that can face the sun.
A wholesome love that glories in the day,
And finds a rapture in its own glad voice.

III.

Our love augments in beauty when the night
Shuts in our world between four sheltering walls.
Fair is the day and yet its splendor palls.
Dear are the shadows that obscure the light,
And dear the stars that tiptoe into sight,
And when the curtain of deep darkness falls
Then heart to heart in clearer accent calls
And the whole Universe is Love's by right.
There is no vexing world to interfere,
No sorrow save the all too rapid flow
Of time's swift river sweeping on and on.
We two are masters of this silent sphere.
Love is the only duty that we know—
Our only fear, the menace of the dawn.

WISHING.

DO you wish the world were better?
Let me tell you what to do.
Set a watch upon your actions,
Keep them always straight and true.
Rid your mind of selfish motives,
Let your thoughts be clean and high.
You can make a little Eden
Of the sphere you occupy.

Do you wish the world were wiser?
Well, suppose you make a start,
By accumulating wisdom
In the scrapbook of your heart;
Do not waste one page on folly;
Live to learn, and learn to live.
If you want to give men knowledge
You must get it, ere you give.

Do you wish the world were happy?
Then remember day by day
Just to scatter seeds of kindness
As you pass along the way,
For the pleasures of the many
May be ofttimes traced to one,
As the hand that plants an acorn
Shelters armies from the sun.

WE TWO.

WE two make home of any place we go;
We two find joy in any kind of weather;
Or if the earth is clothed in bloom or snow,
If summer days invite, or bleak winds blow,
What matters it if we two are together?
We two, we two, we make our world, our weather.

We two make banquets of the plainest fare;
In every cup we find the thrill of pleasure;
We hide with wreaths the furrowed brow of care
And win to smiles the set lips of despair.
For us life always moves with lilting measure;
We two, we two, we make our world, our pleasure.

We two find youth renewed with every dawn;
Each day holds something of an unknown glory.
We waste no thought on grief or pleasure gone;
Tricked out like hope, time leads us on and on,
And thrums upon his harp new song or story.
We two, we two, we find the paths of glory.

We two make heaven here on this little earth;
We do not need to wait for realms eternal.
We know the use of tears, know sorrow's worth,
And pain for us is always love's rebirth.
Our paths lead closely by the paths supernal;
We two, we two, we live in love eternal.

THE POET'S THEME.

"What is the explanation of the strange silence of American poets concerning America's triumphs on sea and land?"—*Literary Digest.*

WHY should the poet of these pregnant times
Be asked to sing of war's unholy crimes?

To laud and eulogize the trade which thrives
On horrid holocausts of human lives.

Man was a fighting beast when earth was young
And war the only theme when Homer sung.

'Twixt might and might the equal contest lay;
Not so the battles of our modern day.

Too often now the conquering hero struts
A Gulliver among the Liliputs.

Success no longer rests on skill or fate
But on the movements of a syndicate.

Of old men fought and deemed it right and just.
To-day the warrior fights because he must,

And in his secret soul feels shame because
He desecrates the higher manhood's laws.

Oh, there are worthier themes for poet's pen
In this great hour, than bloody deeds of men

Or triumphs of one hero (though he be
Deserving song for his humility).

The rights of many—not the worth of one—
The coming issues, not the battle done,

The awful opulence, and awful need—
The rise of brotherhood—the fall of greed.

The soul of man replete with God's own force,
The call "to heights" and not the cry, "to horse"—

Are there not better themes in this great age
For pen of poet, or for voice of sage

Than those old tales of killing? Song is dumb
Only that greater song in time may come.

When comes the bard, he whom the world waits for,
He will not sing of War.

LOVE IS ALL!

LET Labor boldly walk abroad
And take its place with kings,
For who has labored more than God,
The maker of all things?

The time has come, aye, even now it is,
To rank that parable in Genesis
Of God's great curse of labor placed on man,
With other fairy tales. Why, He began
All work Himself! He was so full of force
He flung the solar systems on their course
And builded worlds on worlds; and, not content,
He labors still: when mighty suns are spent,
He forges on His white-hot anvil—space—
New stars to tell His glory and His grace.

Who most achieves is most like God, I hold;
The idler is the black sheep in the fold.

Not for the hardened toiler with the hoe
My tears of sorrow and compassion flow.
Though he be dull, unlettered and not fair
To look upon; tho' he is bowed with care,
Yet in his heart if dear love fold its wings,
He stands a monarch over unloved kings.

One sorrow only in God's world has birth—
To live unloving and unloved on earth;
One joy alone makes life a part of heaven—
The joy of happy love, received and given.

Down through the chaos of our human laws
Love shines supreme, the great Eternal Cause.
God loved so much His thoughts burst into flame,
And from that sacred source Creation came.
The heart which feels this holy light within
Finds God and man and beast and bird its kin.
All class distinctions fade and disappear.
Death is new life, and heaven he sees a-near.
Brother is he to "ox" and "seraphim,"
"Slave to the wheel," mayhap, yet kings to him,
And millionaires, seem paupers, if from them
Life has withheld its luminous great gem.
Or if his badge be sceptre, hoe or hod,
That man is king who knows that love is God.

SONG OF THE SPIRIT.

ALL the aim of life is just
Getting back to God.
Spirit casting off its dust,
Getting back to God.
Every grief we have to bear,
Disappointment, cross, despair,
Each is but another stair
Climbing back to God.

Step by step and mile by mile,—
Getting back to God.
Nothing else is worth the while—
Getting back to God.
Light and shadow fill each day,
Joys and sorrows pass away,
Smile at all, and smiling, say,
Getting back to God.

Do not wear a mournful face
Getting back to God.
Scatter sunshine on the place
Going back to God.
Take what pleasure you can find,
But where'er your paths may wind,
Keep the purpose well in mind,—
Getting back to God.

WOMANHOOD.

SHE must be honest, both in thought and deed,
Of generous impulse, and above all greed;
Not seeking praise, or place, or power, or pelf,
But life's best blessings for her higher self,
Which means the best for all.
She must have faith,
To make good friends of Trouble, Pain and Death,
And understand their Message.
She should be
As redolent with tender sympathy
As is a rose with fragrance.
Cheerfulness
Should be her mantle, even tho' her dress
May be of Sorrow's weaving.
On her face
A loyal nature leaves its seal of grace,
And chastity is in her atmosphere.
Not that chill chastity which seems austere—
(Like untrod snow peaks, lovely to behold
Till once attained—then barren, loveless, cold).
But the white flame that feeds upon the soul
And lights the pathway to a peaceful goal.
A sense of humor, and a touch of mirth,
To brighten up the shadowy spots of earth;
And pride that passes evil—choosing good.
All these unite in perfect womanhood.

MORNING PRAYER.

LET me to-day do something that shall take
A little sadness from the world's vast store,
And may I be so favored as to make
Of joy's too scanty sum a little more.
Let me not hurt, by any selfish deed
Or thoughtless word, the heart of foe or friend;
Nor would I pass, unseeing, worthy need,
Or sin by silence when I should defend.
However meager be my worldly wealth
Let me give something that shall aid my kind,
A word of courage, or a thought of health,
Dropped as I pass for troubled hearts to find.
Let me to-night look back across the span
'Twixt dawn and dark, and to my conscience say—
Because of some good act to beast or man—
"The world is better that I lived to-day."

THE VOICES OF THE PEOPLE.

OH, I hear the people calling through the day time and the night time,
They are calling, they are crying for the coming of the right time.
It behooves you, men and women, it behooves you to be heeding,
For there lurks a note of menace underneath their plaintive pleading.

Let the land usurpers listen, let the greedy-hearted ponder,
On the meaning of the murmur, rising here and swelling yonder,
Swelling louder, waxing stronger, like a storm-fed stream that courses
Through the valleys, down abysses, growing, gaining with new forces.

Day by day the river widens, that great river of opinion,
And its torrent beats and plunges at the base of greed's dominion.
Though you dam it by oppression and fling golden bridges o'er it,
Yet the day and hour advances when in fright you flee before it.

Yes, I hear the people calling, through the night
time and the day time,
Wretched toilers in life's autumn, weary young ones
in life's May time—
They are crying, they are calling for their share of
work and pleasure,
You are heaping high your coffers while you give
them scanty measure,
You have stolen God's wide acres, just to glut your
swollen purses—
Oh, restore them to His children ere their pleading
turns to curses.

THE WORLD GROWS BETTER.

OH, the earth is full of sinning
And of trouble and of woe,
But the devil makes an inning
Every time we say it's so.
And the way to set him scowling,
And to put him back a pace,
Is to stop this stupid grôwling,
And to look things in the face.

If you glance at history's pages,
In all lands and eras known,
You will find the buried ages
Far more wicked than our own.
As you scan each word and letter,
You will realize it more,
That the world to-day is better,
Than it ever was before.

There is much that needs amending
In the present time, no doubt,
There is right that needs amending,
There is wrong needs crushing out.
And we hear the groans and curses
Of the poor who starve and die
While the men with swollen purses
In the place of hearts, go by.

But in spite of all the trouble
That obscures the sun to-day
Just remember it was double,
In the ages passed away.
And those wrongs shall all be righted,
Good shall dominate the land,
For the darkness now is lighted
By the torch in Science's hand.

Forth from little motes in Chaos,
We have come to what we are,
And no evil force can stay us,
We shall mount from star to star,
We shall break each bond and fetter
That has bound us heretofore,
And the earth is surely better,
Than it ever was before.

THE BED.

A HARSH and homely monosyllable,
Abrupt and musicless, and at its best
An inartistic object to the eye,
Yet in this brief and troubled life of man
How full of majesty the part it plays!
It is the cradle which receives the soul,
Naked and wailing, from the Maker's hand.
It is the throne of Love's enlightenment;
And when death offers back to God again
The borrowed spirit, this the holy shrine
From which the hills delectable are seen.
Through all the anxious journey to that goal
It is man's friend, physician, comforter.
When labor wearies, and when pleasure palls,
And the tired heart lets faith slip from its grasp,
'Tis here new courage and new strength are found,
While doubt and darkness change to hope and light.
It is the common ground between two spheres
Where man and angels meet and converse hold,
It is the confidant of hidden woe
Masked from the world beneath a smiling brow.
Into its silent breast young wakeful joy
Whispers its secret through the starlit hours,
And like a white-robed priestess, oft it hears

The wild confession of a crime-stained soul
That looks unflinching in the eyes of men.
A common word, a thing unbeautiful,
Yet in this brief, eventful life of man
How large and varied is the part it plays.

DISCONTENT.

THE splendid discontent of God
With chaos made the world.
Set suns in place, and filled all space
With stars that shone and whirled.

If apes had been content with tails,
No thing of higher shape
Had come to birth: the king of earth
To-day would be an ape.

And from the discontent of man
The world's best progress springs.
Then feed the flame (from God it came),
Until you mount on wings.

A MAN'S IDEAL.

A LOVELY little keeper of the home,
Absorbed in menu books, yet erudite
When I need counsel; quick at repartee
And slow to anger. Modest as a flower
Yet scintillant and radiant as a star.
Unmercenary in her mould of mind,
While opulent and dainty in her tastes.
A nature generous and free, albeit
The incarnation of economy.
She must be chaste as proud Diana was,
Yet warm as Venus. To all others cold
As some white glacier glittering in the sun;
To me as ardent as the sensuous rose
That yields its sweetness to the burrowing bee.
All ignorant of evil in the world,
And innocent as any cloistered nun,
Yet wise as Phrynne in the arts of love
When I come thirsting to her nectared lips.
Good as the best, and tempting as the worst,
A saint, a siren, and a paradox.

WAR SONNETS.

I.

WAR is destructive, wasteful, brutal, yet
The energies of men are brought to play,
And hidden valor by occasion met
Leaps to the light, as precious jewels may
When earthquakes rend the rock. The stress and strain
Of war stirs men to do their worst and best.
Heroes are forged on anvils hot with pain
And splendid courage comes but with the test
Some natures ripen and some virtues bloom
Only in blood-red soil; some souls prove great
Only in moments dark with death or doom.
This is the sad historic jest which fate
Flings to the world, recurring time on time.
Many must fall that one may seem sublime.

II.

Above the chaos of impending ills,
Through all the clamor of insistent strife,
Now while the noise of warring nations fills
Each throbbing hour with menaces to life,
I hear the voice of Progress! Strange indeed
The shadowed pathways that lead up to light.
But as a runner sometimes will recede

That he may so accumulate his might,
Then with a will that needs must be obeyed
Rushes resistless to the goal with ease,
So the whole world seems now to retrograde,
Slips back to war, that it may speed to peace.
And in that backward step it gathers force
For the triumphant finish of its course.

MY LAUNCH AND I.

WHAT glorious times we have together,
My launch and I, in the summer weather!
My trim little launch with its sturdy sides
And its strong heart beating away as it glides
Out of the harbor and out of the bay,
Wherever our fancy may lead away,
Rollicking over the salt sea track
Hurrying seaward and hurrying back.

My boat has never a braggart sail,
To boast in the breeze, in the calm to quail,
No tyrant boom deals a sudden blow,
Saying, "You are my lackey, bend low, bend low!"
No mast struts over a windless sea
To show how powerless pride may be.
But sure and steady and true and staunch
It bounds o'er the billows,—my little launch.

Ready and willing and quick to feel
The slightest touch of my hand on the wheel
It laughs in the teeth of a driving gale,
Or skims by the cat-boat's drooping sail.
Its head held high when the Sound is still,
Then dipping its prow like a water bird's bill

Down under the waves of a rolling sea—
Oh, my gay little launch is the boat for me!

Ofttimes when the great Sound seethes and swirls
I carry a cargo of laughing girls.
Bare-armed, bare-limbed, and with hanging hair
They are bold as mermaids and twice as fair.
They swarm from the cabin,—they perch on the prow.
When the tenth wave batters them, breast and brow,
They bloom the brighter, as sea flowers do
While their shrill, sweet merriment bursts anew.

And oft when the sunset dyes the bay
O'er a mirror-like surface, we glide away,
My launch and I, to follow the breeze
That has jilted the shore for the deeper seas.
When the full moon flirts with the perigee tide
On a track of silver, away we ride —
Oh, glorious times we have together,
My boat and I, in the summer weather.

THE FIRE BRIGADE.

HARK! high o'er the rattle and clamor and clatter
Of traffic-filled streets, do you hear that loud noise?
And pushing and rushing to see what's the matter,
Like herds of wild cattle, go pell mell the boys.

There's a fire in the city! the engines are coming!
The bold bells are clanging, "Make way in the street!"
The wheels of the hose-cart are spinning and humming
In time to the music of galloping feet.

Make way there! make way there! the horses are flying,
The sparks from their swift hoofs shoot higher and higher,
The crowds are increasing—the gamins are crying:
"Hooray, boys!" "Hooray, boys!" "Come on to the fire!"

With clanging and banging and clatter and rattle,
The long ladders follow the engine and hose.
The men are all ready to dash into battle;
But will they come out again? God only knows.

At windows and doorways crowd questioning faces;
There's something about it that quickens one's breath.
How proudly the brave fellows sit in their places—
And speed to the conflict that may be their death.

Still faster and faster and faster and faster
The grand horses thunder and leap on their way.
The red foe is yonder and may prove the master;
Turn out there, bold traffic—turn out there, I say!

For once the loud truckman knows oaths will not matter,
And reins in his horses and yields to his fate.
The engines are coming! let pleasure crowds scatter,
Let street car and truckman and mail wagon wait.

They speed like a comet—they pass in a minute,
The boys follow on like a tail to a kite;
The commonplace street has but traffic now in it,
The great fire engines have swept out of sight.

PROGRESS.

IN its giving and its getting, in its smiling and its fretting,
In its peaceful years of toiling and its awful days of war,
Ever on the world is moving and all human life is proving
It is reaching toward the purpose that the great God meant it for.

Through its laughing and its weeping, through its losing and its keeping,
Through its follies and its labors, weaving in and out of sight
To the end from the beginning, through all virtue and all sinning
Reeled from God's great spool of Progress, runs the golden thread of Right.

All the darkness and the errors, all the sorrows and the terrors
Time has painted in the background on the canvas of the World,
All the beauty of life's story he will do in tones of glory
When these final blots of shadows from his brushes have been hurled.

THE TIDES.

BE careful what rubbish you toss in the tide.
On outgoing billows it drifts from your sight,
But back on the incoming waves it may ride
And land at your threshold again before night.
Be careful what rubbish you toss in the tide.

Be careful what follies you toss in life's sea.
On bright dancing billows they drift far away,
But back on the Nemesis tides they may be
Thrown down at your threshold unwelcome day.
Be careful what follies you toss in youth's sea.

THAT DAY.

O HEART of mine, through all those perfect days,
Whether of white Decembers or green Mays,
There runs a dark thought like a creeping snake,
Or like a black thread which by some mistake
Life has strung through the pearls of happy years,
A thought which borders all my joy with tears.

Some day, some day, or you, or I, alone,
Must look upon the scenes we two have known,
Must tread the selfsame paths we two have trod,
And cry in vain to one who is with God,
To lean down from the Silent Realms and say:
"I love you" in the old familiar way.

Some day—and each day, beauteous though it be,
Brings closer that dread hour for you or me.
Fleet-footed joy, who hurries time along,
Is yet a secret foe who does us wrong;
Speeding us gayly, though he well doth know
Of yonder pathway where but one may go.

Ay, one will go. To go is sweet, I wis—
Yet God must needs invent some special bliss
To make his Paradise seem very dear

To one who goes and leaves the other here.
To sever souls so bound by love and time,
For any one but God, would be a crime.

Yet death will entertain his own, I think.
To one who stays life gives the gall to drink;
To one who stays, or be it you, or me,
There waits the Garden of Gethsemane.
Oh, dark, inevitable, and awful day,
When one of us must go and one must stay!

SO MANY WAYS.

I.

EARTH has so many ways of being fair:
Its sweet young Spring, its Summer clothed in light,
Its regal Autumn trailing into sight
As Summer wafts her last kiss on the air.
Bold virile Winter with the wind-blown hair
And the broad beauty of a world in white.
Mysterious dawn, high noon, and pensive night,
And over all God's great worlds watching there.
The voices of the birds at break of day;
The smell of young buds bursting on the tree;
The soft suggested promises of bliss,
Uttered by every subtle voice of May;
And the strange wonder of the mighty sea,
Lifting its cheek to take the full moon's kiss.

II.

Love has so many ways of being sweet.
The timorous rose-hued dawning of its reign
Before the senses waken; that dear pain
Of mingled doubt and certainty: the fleet
First moment when the clasped hands meet
In wordless eloquence; the loss and gain

When the strong billows from the deeper main
Submerge the valleys of the incomplete.
The restless passion rising into peace;
The growing beauty of two paths that blend
Into one perfect way. The glorious faith
That feels no fear of life's expiring lease.
And that majestic victory at the end
When love, unconquered, triumphs over death.

THE PROTEST.

SAID the great machine of iron and wood,
"Lo, I am a creature meant for good."
But the criminal clutch of Godless greed
Has made me a monster that scatters need
And want and hunger wherever I go.
I would lift men's burdens and lighten their woe
I would give them leisure to laugh in the sun,
If owned by the Many—instead of the one.

If owned by the people, the whole wide earth
Should learn my purpose and know my worth.
I would close the chasm that yawns in our soil
'Twixt unearned riches and ill-paid toil.
No man should hunger, and no man labour
To fill the purse of an idle neighbour;
And each man should know when his work was done,
Were I shared by the Many—not owned by one.

I am forced by the few with their greed for gain,
To forge for the many new fetters of pain.
Yet this is my purpose, and ever will be
To set the slaves of the workshop free.
God hasten the day when, overjoyed
That desperate host of the unemployed
Shall hear my message and understand,
And hail me friend in an opulent land.

THE SNOWFLAKE.

ALL sheltered by the mother-cloud
The little flake looked down;
It saw the city's seething crowd,
It saw the shining town.

"How fair and far those steeples rise
To greet us, mother dear!
It is so lovely in the skies,
Why do we linger here?

"The south wind says the merry earth
Is full of life and glow;
I long to mingle with its mirth—
O mother! let us go."

The mother-cloud reached out her arm,
"Oh, little flake," quoth she,
"The earth is full of sin and harm,
Bide here, bide here, with me."

But when the pale cloud-mother slept,
The north wind whispered "Fly!"
And from her couch the snowflake crept
And tiptoed down the sky.

Before the Winter's sun his fleet
Brief journey made that day,
All soiled and blackened in the street,
The little snowflake lay.

GOD'S MOTTO.

THIS is the season of wooing and mating,
The heart of Nature calls out for its own,
And God have pity on those who are waiting
The fair unfolding of Spring, alone.
For the fowls fly north in pairs together,
And two by two are the leaves unfurled,
And the whole intent of the wind and weather
Is to waken love, in the thought of the world.

Up through the soil where the grass is springing,
To flaunt green flags in the golden light,
Each little sprout its mate is bringing
(Oh, one little sprout were a lonely sight).
We wake at dawn with the silvery patter
Of bird-notes falling like showers of rain,
And need but listen to prove their chatter
The amorous echo of love's sweet pain.

In the buzz of the bee and the strong steed's neighing,
In the bursting bud and the heart's unrest,
The voice of Nature again is saying,
In God's own motto, that love is best.
For this is the season of wooing and mating,
The heart of Nature calls out for its own;
And oh, the sorrow of souls that are waiting
The soft unfolding of Spring, alone.

HOW LIKE THE SEA.

HOW like the sea, the myriad-minded sea,
Is this large love of ours: so vast, so deep,
So full of mysteries! it, too, can keep
Its secrets, like the ocean; and is free,
Free, as the boundless main. Now it may be
Calm like the brow of some sweet child asleep;
Again its seething billows surge and leap
And break in fulness of their ecstasy.

Each wave so like the wave which came before,
Yet never two the same! Imperative
And then persuasive as the cooing dove,
Encroaching ever on the yielding shore—
Ready to take; yet readier still to give—
How like the myriad-minded sea, is love.

TRUE CHARITY.

I GAVE a beggar from my little store
Of well-earned gold. He spent the shining ore
And came again, and yet again, still cold
And hungry, as before.

I gave a thought, and through that thought of mine
He found himself, the man, supreme, divine!
Fed, clothed and crowned with blessings manifold.
And now he begs no more.

WHEN THE REGIMENT CAME BACK.

ALL the uniforms were blue, all the swords were bright and new,
When the regiment went marching down the street,
All the men were hale and strong as they proudly moved along,
Through the cheers that drowned the music of their feet.
Oh, the music of the feet keeping time to drums that beat,
Oh, the splendor and the glitter of the sight,
As with swords and rifles new and in uniforms of blue,
The regiment went marching to the fight.

When the regiment came back all the guns and swords were black
And the uniforms had faded out to gray,
And the faces of the men who marched through that street again
Seemed like faces of the dead who lose their way.
For the dead who lose their way can not look more wan and gray.
Oh, the sorrow and the pity of the sight,
Oh, the weary lagging feet out of step with drums that beat,
As the regiment comes marching from the fight.

WOMAN TO MAN.

"Woman is man's enemy, rival and competitor."—JOHN J. INGALLS.

YOU do but jest, sir, and you jest not well,
How could the hand be enemy of the arm,
Or seed and sod be rivals! How could light
Feel jealousy of heat, plant of the leaf
Or competition dwell 'twixt lip and smile?
Are we not part and parcel of yourselves?
Like strands in one great braid we intertwine
And make the perfect whole. You could not be,
Unless we gave you birth; we are the soil
From which you sprang, yet sterile were that soil
Save as you planted. (Though in the Book we read
One woman bore a child with no man's aid
We find no record of a man-child born
Without the aid of woman! Fatherhood
Is but a small achievement at the best
While motherhood comprises heaven and hell.)
This ever-growing argument of sex
Is most unseemly, and devoid of sense.
Why waste more time in controversy, when
There is not time enough for all of love,
Our rightful occupation in this life.
Why prate of our defects, of where we fail,

When just the story of our worth would need
Eternity for telling, and our best
Development comes ever thro' your praise,
As through our praise you reach your highest self.
Oh! had you not been miser of your praise
And let our virtues be their own reward
The old established order of the world
Would never have been changed. Small blame is ours
For this unsexing of ourselves, and worse
Effeminizing of the male. We were
Content, sir, till you starved us, heart and brain.
All we have done, or wise, or otherwise
Traced to the root, was done for love of you.
Let us taboo all vain comparisons,
And go forth as God meant us, hand in hand,
Companions, mates and comrades evermore;
Two parts of one divinely ordained whole.

THE TRAVELER.

Reply to Rudyard Kipling's "He travels the fastest who travels alone."

WHO travels alone with his eyes on the heights,
Tho' he laughs in the day time oft weeps in the nights.

For courage goes down at the set of the sun
When the toil of the journey is all borne by one.

He speeds but to grief tho' full gayly he ride
Who travels alone without love at his side.

Who travels alone without lover or friend
But hurries from nothing, to naught at the end.

Tho' great be his winnings and high be his goal
He is bankrupt in wisdom and beggared in soul.

Life's one gift of value to him is denied
Who travels alone without love at his side.

It is easy enough in this world to make haste
If one live for that purpose—but think of the waste.

For life is a poem to leisurely read
And the joy of the journey lies not in its speed.

Oh, vain his achievement, and petty his pride
Who travels alone without love at his side.

THE EARTH.

THE earth is yours and mine,
Our God's bequest.
That testament divine
Who dare contest?

Usurpers of the earth,
We claim our share.
We are of royal birth.
Beware! beware!

Unloose the hand of greed
From God's fair land,
We claim but what we need—
That, we demand.

NOW.

I LEAVE with God, to-morrow's where and how,
And do concern myself but with the Now,
That little word though half the future's length
Well used, holds twice its meaning and its strength.

Like one blindfolded groping out his way,
I will not try to touch beyond to-day.
Since all the future is concealed from sight
I need but strive to make the next step right.

That done the next, and so on, till I find
Perchance some day I am no longer blind,
And looking up, behold a radiant Friend
Who says, "Rest, now, for you have reached the end."

YOU AND TO-DAY.

WITH every rising of the sun
Think of your life as just begun.

The past has shrived and buried deep
All yesterdays—there let them sleep.

Nor seek to summon back one ghost
Of that innumerable host.

Concern yourself with but to-day.
Woo it and teach it to obey,

Your wish and will. Since time began
To-day has been the friend of man.

But in his blindness and his sorrow
He looks to yesterday and to-morrow.

You and to-day! a soul sublime
And the great pregnant hour of time.

With God between to bind the train—
Go forth I say—attain—attain.

THE REASON.

DO you know what moves the tides
As they swing from low to high?
'Tis the love, love, love,
Of the moon within the sky.
Oh, they follow where she guides,
Do the faithful hearted tides.

Do you know what moves the earth
Out of winter into spring?
'Tis the love, love, love,
Of the sun, the mighty king.
Oh, the rapture that finds birth,
In the kiss of sun and earth.

Do you know what makes sweet songs
Ring for me above earth's strife?
'Tis the love, love, love,
That you bring into my life,
Oh, the glory of the songs
In the heart where love belongs.

THE CHAIN.

MEN have outgrown the worthless creed,
Which bade them deem it God's good will,
That labor sweat and starve to fill,
And glut the purse of idle greed.

They have outgrown the poor content
That breeds oppression. Forged by pain,
Mind links with mind in one great chain
Of protest and of argument.

And by the hand of progress hurled,
This mighty chain of human thought,
In silence and in anguish wrought,
Encompasses the pulsing world.

And he who will not form a link
Of new conditions soon to be,
Ere long must stand aghast to see,
Old systems toppling down the brink.

They cannot and they shall not last.
The broader impulse of the day
Will gain and grow and sweep away
The rank injustice of the past.

The purport of the hour is vast.
The world needs justice. It demands

United hearts, united hands.
The day of charity is past.

Let no man think he can despoil
And rob his kind by trick and fraud,
And at the last make peace with God
By tossing alms to honest toil.

More labor for the selfish few;
More leisure for the burdened mass;
These things shall surely come to pass,
As old conditions change to new.

They change thro' strain and strike and strife,
The worst but speeds the final best,
Work for all men—for all men rest,
And time to taste the joys of life.

MISSION.

IF you are sighing for a lofty work,
If great ambitions dominate your mind,
Just watch yourself and see you do not shirk
The common little ways of being kind.

If you are dreaming of a future goal,
When crowned with glory men shall own your power,
Be careful that you let no struggling soul
Go by unaided in the present hour.

If you are moved to pity for the earth,
And long to aid it, do not look so high,
You pass some poor, dumb creature faint with thirst.
All life is equal in the eternal eye.

If you would help to make the wrong things right,
Begin at home: there lies a lifetime's toil.
Weed your own garden fair for all men's sight,
Before you plan to till another's soil.

God chooses his own leaders in the world,
And from the rest he asks but willing hands.
As mighty mountains into place are hurled,
While patient tides may only shape the sands.

REPETITION.

OVER and over and over
These truths I will weave in song,
That God's great plan needs you and me,
That will is greater than destiny
And that love moves the world along.

However mankind may doubt it,
It shall listen and hear my creed,
That God may ever be found within—
That the worship of self is the only sin,
And the only devil is greed.

Over and over and over
These truths I will say and sing,
That love is mightier far than hate
That a man's own thought is a man's own fate,
And that life is a goodly thing.

BEGIN THE DAY.

BEGIN each morning with a talk to God,
And ask for your divine inheritance
Of usefulness, contentment and success.
Resign all fear, all doubt, and all despair.
The stars doubt not, and they are undismayed,
Though whirled through space for countless centuries,
And told not why or wherefore: and the sea
With everlasting ebb and flow obeys,
And leaves the purpose with the unseen Cause.
The star sheds radiance on a million worlds,
The sea is prodigal with waves, and yet
No luster from the star is lost, and not
One drop is missing from the ocean tides.
Oh, brother to the star and sea, know all
God's opulence is held in trust for those
Who wait serenely and who work in faith.

WORDS.

WORDS are great forces in the realm of life.
Be careful of their use. Who talks of hate,
Of poverty, of sickness, but sets rife
These very elements to mar his fate.

When love, health, happiness and plenty hear
Their names repeated over day by day,
They wing their way like answering fairies near,
Then nestle down within our homes to stay.

Who talks of evil conjures into shape
The formless thing and gives it life and scope.
This is the law: then let no word escape
That does not breathe of everlasting hope.

FATE AND I.

WISE men tell me thou, O Fate,
Art invincible and great.

Well, I own thy prowess; still
Dare I flount thee, with my will.

Thou canst shatter in a span
All the earthly pride of man.

Outward things thou canst control
But stand back—I rule my soul!

Death? 'Tis such a little thing—
Scarcely worth the mentioning.

What has death to do with me,
Save to set my spirit free?

Something in me dwells, O Fate,
That can rise and dominate.

Loss, and sorrow, and disaster,
How, then, Fate, art thou my master?

In the great primeval morn
My immortal will was born.

Part of that stupendous Cause
Which conceived the Solar Laws.

Lit the suns and filled the seas,
Royalest of pedigrees.

That great Cause was Love, the Source,
Who most loves has most of Force.

He who harbors hate one hour
Saps the soul of Peace and Power.

He who will not hate his foe
Need not dread life's hardest blow.

In the realm of brotherhood
Wishing no man aught but good.

Naught but good can come to me.
This is love's supreme decree.

Since I bar my door to hate,
What have I to fear, O Fate?

Since I fear not—Fate, I vow,
I the ruler am, not thou!

UNTO THE END.

I KNOW not where to-morrow's paths may wend,
Nor what the future holds; but this I know,
Whichever way my feet are forced to go,
I shall be given courage to the end.

Though God that awful gift of His may send
We call long life, where headstones in a row
Hide all of happiness, yet be it so:
I shall be given courage to the end.

If dark the deepening shadows be, that blend
With life's pale sunlight when the sun dips low,
Though joy speeds by and sorrow's steps are slow,
I shall be given courage to the end.

I do not question what the years portend—
Or good or ill, whatever wind may blow;
It is enough, enough for me to know
I shall be given courage to the end.

ATTAINMENT.

USE all your hidden forces. Do not miss
The purpose of this life, and do not wait
For circumstance to mould or change your fate.
In your own self lies Destiny. Let this
Vast truth cast out all fear, all prejudice,
All hesitation. Know that you are great,
Great with divinity. So dominate
Environment, and enter into bliss.
Love largely and hate nothing. Hold no aim
That does not chord with universal good.
Hear what the voices of the Silence say,
All joys are yours if you put forth your claim.
Once let the spiritual laws be understood,
Material things must answer and obey.

A PLEA TO PEACE.

WHEN mighty issues loom before us, all
The petty great men of the day seem small,
Like pigmies standing in a blaze of light
Before some grim majestic mountain height.
War, with its bloody and impartial hand,
Reveals the hidden weakness of a land,
Uncrowns the heroes trusting Peace has made
Of men whose honor is a thing of trade.
And turns the searchlight full on many a place
Where proud conventions long have masked disgrace.
Oh, lovely Peace! as thou art fair be wise.
Demand great men and great men shall arise
To do thy bidding. Even as warriors come,
Swift at the call of bugle and of drum,
So at the voice of Peace, imperative
As bugle's call, shall heroes spring to live
For country and for thee. In every land,
In every age, men are what times demand.
Demand the best, oh, Peace, and teach thy sons
They need not rush in front of death-charged guns
With murder in their hearts to prove their worth.
The grandest heroes who have graced the earth
Were love-filled souls who did not seek the fray,
But chose the safe, hard, high and lonely way

Of selfless labor for a suffering world.
Beneath our glorious flag again unfurled
In victory such heroes wait to be
Called into bloodless action, Peace, by thee.
Be thou insistent in thy stern demand,
And wise, great men shall rise up in the land.

PRESUMPTION.

WHENEVER I am prone to doubt or wonder—
I check myself, and say, "That mighty One
Who made the solar system can not blunder—
And for the best all things are being done."
Who set the stars on their eternal courses
Has fashioned this strange earth by some sure plan.
Bow low, bow low to those majestic forces
Nor dare to doubt their wisdom—puny man.

You can not put one little star in motion,
You can not shape one single forest leaf,
Nor fling a mountain up, nor sink an ocean,
Presumptuous pigmy, large with unbelief.
You can not bring one dawn of regal splendor
Nor bid the day to shadowy twilight fall,
Nor send the pale moon forth with radiance tender,
And dare you doubt the One who has done all?

"So much is wrong, there is such pain—such sinning."
Yet look again—behold how much is right!
And He who formed the world from its beginning
Knows how to guide it upward to the light.
Your task, oh, man, is not to carp and cavil
At God's achievements, but with purpose strong
To cling to good, and turn away from evil.
That is the way to help the world along.

HIGH NOON.

TIME'S finger on the dial of my life
Points to high noon! and yet the half-spent day
Leaves less than half remaining, for the dark,
Bleak shadows of the grave engulf the end.

To those who burn the candle to the stick,
The sputtering socket yields but little light.
Long life is sadder than an early death.
We cannot count on raveled threads of age
Whereof to weave a fabric. We must use
The warp and woof the ready present yields
And toil while daylight lasts. When I bethink
How brief the past, the future, still more brief
Calls on to action, action! Not for me
Is time for retrospection or for dreams,
Not time for self-laudation or remorse.
Have I done nobly? Then I must not let
Dead yesterday unborn to-morrow shame.
Have I done wrong? Well, let the bitter taste
Of fruit that turned to ashes on my lip
Be my reminder in temptation's hour,
And keep me silent when I would condemn.
Sometimes it takes the acid of a sin
To cleanse the clouded windows of our souls
So pity may shine through them.

Looking back,
My faults and errors seem like stepping-stones
That led the way to knowledge of the truth
And made me value virtue; sorrows shine
In rainbow colors o'er the gulf of years,
Where lie forgotten pleasures.

Looking forth,
Out to the western sky still bright with noon,
I feel well spurred and booted for the strife
That ends not till Nirvana is attained.

Battling with fate, with men and with myself,
Up the steep summit of my life's forenoon,
Three things I learned, three things of precious worth,
To guide and help me down the western slope.
I have learned how to pray, and toil, and save:
To pray for courage to receive what comes,
Knowing what comes to be divinely sent;
To toil for universal good, since thus
And only thus can good come unto me;
To save, by giving whatsoe'er I have
To those who have not—this alone is gain.

THOUGHT-MAGNETS.

WITH each strong thought, with every earnest longing
For aught thou deemest needful to thy soul,
Invisible vast forces are set thronging
Between thee and that goal.

'Tis only when some hidden weakness alters
And changes thy desire, or makes it less,
That this mysterious army ever falters
Or stops short of success.

Thought is a magnet; and the longed-for pleasure,
Or boon, or aim, or object, is the steel;
And its attainment hangs but on the measure
Of what thy soul can feel.

SMILES.

SMILE a little, smile a little,
As you go along,
Not alone when life is pleasant,
But when things go wrong.
Care delights to see you frowning,
Loves to hear you sigh;
Turn a smiling face upon her,
Quick the dame will fly.

Smile a little, smile a little,
All along the road;
Every life must have its burden,
Every heart its load.
Why sit down in gloom and darkness,
With your grief to sup?
As you drink Fate's bitter tonic
Smile across the cup.

Smile upon the troubled pilgrims
Whom you pass and meet;
Frowns are thorns, and smiles are blossoms
Oft for weary feet.
Do not make the way seem harder
By a sullen face,

Smile a little, smile a little,
Brighten up the place.

Smile upon your undone labor;
Not for one who grieves
O'er his task, waits wealth or glory;
He who smiles achieves.
Though you meet with loss and sorrow
In the passing years,
Smile a little, smile a little,
Even through your tears.

THE UNDISCOVERED COUNTRY.

MAN has explored all countries and all lands,
And made his own the secrets of each clime.
Now, ere the world has fully reached its prime,
The oval earth lies compassed with steel bands,
The seas are slaves to ships that touch all strands,
And even the haughty elements sublime
And bold, yield him their secrets for all time,
And speed like lackeys forth at his commands.

Still, though he search from shore to distant shore,
And no strange realms, no unlocated plains
Are left for his attainment and control,
Yet is there one more kingdom to explore.
Go, know thyself, O man! there yet remains
The undiscovered country of thy soul!

THE UNIVERSAL ROUTE.

AS we journey along, with a laugh and a song,
We see, 'on youth's flower-decked slope,
Like a beacon of light, shining fair on the sight,
The beautiful Station of Hope.

But the wheels of old Time roll along as we climb,
And our youth speeds away on the years;
And with hearts that are numb with life's sorrows we come
To the mist-covered Station of Tears.

Still onward we pass, where the milestones, alas!
Are the tombs of our dead, to the West,
Where glitters and gleams, in the dying sunbeams,
The sweet, silent Station of Rest.

All rest is but change, and no grave can estrange
The soul from its Parent above;
And, scorning the rod, it soars back to its God,
To the limitless City of Love.

UNANSWERED PRAYERS.

LIKE some school master, kind in being stern,
Who hears the children crying o'er their slates
And calling, "Help me, master!" yet helps not,
Since in his silence and refusal lies
Their self-development, so God abides
Unheeding many prayers. He is not deaf
To any cry sent up from earnest hearts;
He hears and strengthens when He must deny.
He sees us weeping over life's hard sums,
But should He give the key and dry our tears,
What would it profit us when school were done
And not one lesson mastered?

What a world
Were this if all our prayers were answered. Not
In famed Pandora's box were such vast ills
As lie in human hearts. Should our desires,
Voiced one by one in prayer, ascend to God
And come back as events shaped to our wish,
What chaos would result!

In my fierce youth
I sighed out breath enough to move a fleet,
Voicing wild prayers to heaven for fancied boons
Which were denied; and that denial bends
My knee to prayers of gratitude each day

Of my maturer years. Yet from those prayers
I rose alway regirded for the strife
And conscious of new strength. Pray on, sad heart,
That which thou pleadest for may not be given,
But in the lofty altitude where souls
Who supplicate God's grace are lifted, there
Thou shalt find help to bear thy daily lot
Which is not elsewhere found.

THANKSGIVING.

WE walk on starry fields of white
And do not see the daisies;
For blessings common in our sight
We rarely offer praises.
We sigh for some supreme delight
To crown our lives with splendor,
And quite ignore our daily store
Of pleasures sweet and tender.

Our cares are bold and push their way
Upon our thought and feeling.
They hang about us all the day,
Our time from pleasure stealing.
So unobtrusive many a joy
We pass by and forget it,
But worry strives to own our lives,
And conquers if we let it.

There's not a day in all the year
But holds some hidden pleasure,
And looking back, joys oft appear
To brim the past's wide measure.
But blessings are like friends, I hold,
Who love and labor near us.

We ought to raise our notes of praise
While living hearts can hear us.

Full many a blessing wears the guise
Of worry or of trouble;
Far-seeing is the soul, and wise,
Who knows the mask is double.
But he who has the faith and strength
To thank his God for sorrow
Has found a joy without alloy
To gladden every morrow.

We ought to make the moments notes
Of happy, glad Thanksgiving;
The hours and days a silent phrase
Of music we are living.
And so the theme should swell and grow
As weeks and months pass o'er us,
And rise sublime at this good time,
A grand Thanksgiving chorus.

CONTRASTS.

I SEE the tall church steeples,
They reach so far, so far;
But the eyes of my heart see the world's great mart
Where the starving people are.

I hear the church bells ringing
Their chimes on the morning air;
But my soul's sad ear is hurt to hear
The poor man's cry of despair

Thicker and thicker the churches,
Nearer and nearer the sky—
But alack for their creeds while the poor man's needs
Grow deeper as years roll by.

THY SHIP.

HADST thou a ship, in whose vast hold lay stored
The priceless riches of all climes and lands,
Say, wouldst thou let it float upon the seas
Unpiloted, of fickle winds the sport,
And of wild waves and hidden rocks the prey?

Thine is that ship; and in its depths concealed
Lies all the wealth of this vast universe—
Yea, lies some part of God's omnipotence,
The legacy divine of every soul.
Thy will, O man, thy will is that great ship,
And yet behold it drifting here and there—
One moment lying motionless in port,
Then on high seas by sudden impulse flung,

Then drying on the sands, and yet again
Sent forth on idle quests to no-man's land
To carry nothing and to nothing bring;
Till worn and fretted by the aimless strife
And buffeted by vacillating winds
It founders on a rock, or springs a leak
With all its unused treasures in the hold.

Go save thy ship, thou sluggard; take the wheel
And steer to knowledge, glory and success.

Great mariners have made the pathway plain
For thee to follow; hold thou to the course
Of Concentration Channel, and all things
Shall come in answer to thy swerveless wish
As comes the needle to the magnet's call,
Or sunlight to the prisoned blade of grass
That yearns all winter for the kiss of spring.

LIFE.

ALL in the dark we grope along,
And if we go amiss
We learn at least which path is wrong,
And there is gain in this.

We do not always win the race.
By only running right,
We have to tread the mountain's base
Before we reach its height.

The Christs alone no errors made;
So often had they trod
The paths that lead through light and shade,
They had become as God.

As Krishna, Buddha, Christ again,
They passed along the way,
And left those mighty truths which men
But dimly grasp to-day.

But he who loves himself the last
And knows the use of pain,
Though strewn with errors all his past,
He surely shall attain.

Some souls there are that needs must taste
Of wrong, ere choosing right;
We should not call those years a waste
Which led us to the light.

A MARINE ETCHING.

A YACHT from its harbor ropes pulled free,
And leaped like a steed o'er the race track blue,
Then up behind her the dust of the sea,
A gray fog, drifted, and hid her from view.

"LOVE THYSELF LAST."

LOVE thyself last. Look near, behold thy duty
To those who walk beside thee down life's road,
Make glad their days by little acts of beauty
And help them bear the burden of earth's load.

Love thyself last. Look far and find the stranger,
Who staggers 'neath his sin and his despair;
Go lend a hand, and lead him out of danger,
To heights where he may see the world is fair.

Love thyself last. The vastnesses above thee
Are filled with Spirit Forces, strong and pure
And fervently, these faithful friends shall love thee:
Keep thou thy watch o'er others and endure.

Love thyself last; and oh, such joy shall thrill thee,
As never yet to selfish souls was given.
Whate'er thy lot, a perfect peace will fill thee,
And earth shall seem the ante-room of Heaven.

Love thyself last, and thou shall grow in spirit
To see, to hear, to know, and understand.
The message of the stars, lo, thou shall hear it,
And all God's joys shall be at thy command.

CHRISTMAS FANCIES.

WHEN Christmas bells are swinging above the fields of snow,
We hear sweet voices ringing from lands of long ago,
And etched on vacant places
Are half forgotten faces
Of friends we used to cherish, and loves we used to know—
When Christmas bells are swinging above the fields of snow.

Uprising from the ocean of the present surging near,
We see, with strange emotion that is not free from fear,
That continent Elysian
Long vanished from our vision,
Youth's lovely lost Atlantis, so mourned for and so dear,
Uprising from the ocean of the present surging near.

When gloomy gray Decembers are roused to Christmas mirth,
The dullest life remembers there once was joy on earth,

And draws from youth's recesses
Some memory it possesses,
And, gazing through the lens of time, exaggerates its worth,
When gloomy gray December is roused to Christmas mirth.

When hanging up the holly or mistletoe, I wis
Each heart recalls some folly that lit the world with bliss.
Not all the seers and sages
With wisdom of the ages
Can give the mind such pleasure as memories of that kiss
When hanging up the holly or mistletoe, I wis.

For life was made for loving, and love alone repays,
As passing years are proving, for all of Time's sad ways.
There lies a sting in pleasure,
And fame gives shallow measure,
And wealth is but a phantom that mocks the restless days,
For life was made for loving, and only loving pays.

When Christmas bells are pelting the air with silver chimes,
And silences are melting to soft, melodious rhymes,

Let Love, the world's beginning,
End fear and hate and sinning;
Let Love, the God Eternal, be worshiped in all climes
When Christmas bells are pelting the air with silver chimes.

THE RIVER.

I AM a river flowing from God's sea
Through devious ways. He mapped my course for me;
I cannot change it; mine alone the toil
To keep the waters free from grime and soil.
The winding river ends where it began;
And when my life has compassed its brief span
I must return to that mysterious source.
So let me gather daily on my course
The perfume from the blossoms as I pass,
Balm from the pines, and healing from the grass,
And carry down my current as I go
Not common stones but precious gems to show;
And tears (the holy water from sad eyes)
Back to God's sea, from which all rivers rise.
Let me convey, not blood from wounded hearts,
Nor poison which the upas tree imparts.
When over flowery vales I leap with joy,
Let me not devastate them, nor destroy,
But rather leave them fairer to the sight;
Mine be the lot to comfort and delight.
And if down awful chasms I needs must leap
Let me not murmur at my lot, but sweep
On bravely to the end without one fear,

Knowing that He who planned my ways stands
near.
Love sent me forth, to Love I go again,
For Love is all, and over all. Amen.

SORRY.

THERE is much that makes me sorry as I journey down life's way,
And I seem to see more pathos in poor human lives each day.
I'm sorry for the strong, brave men, who shield the weak from harm,
But who, in their own troubled hours, find no protecting arm.

I'm sorry for the victors who have reached success, to stand
As targets for the arrows shot by envious failure's hand.
I'm sorry for the generous hearts who freely shared their wine,
But drink alone the gall of tears in fortune's drear decline.

I'm sorry for the souls who build their own fame's funeral pyre,
Derided by the scornful throng like ice deriding fire.
I'm sorry for the conquering ones who know not sin's defeat,
But daily tread down fierce desire 'neath scorched and bleeding feet.

I'm sorry for the anguished hearts that break with passion's strain,
But I'm sorrier for the poor starved souls that never knew love's pain,
Who hunger on through barren years not tasting joys they crave,
For sadder far is such a lot than weeping o'er a grave.

I'm sorry for the souls that come unwelcomed into birth,
I'm sorry for the unloved old who cumber up the earth,
I'm sorry for the suffering poor in life's great maelstrom hurled,
In truth I'm sorry for them all who make this aching world.

But underneath whate'er seems sad and is not understood,
I know there lies hid from our sight a mighty germ of good.
And this belief stands firm by me, my sermon, motto, text—
The sorriest things in this life will seem grandest in the next.

AMBITION'S TRAIL.

IF all the end of this continuous striving
Were simply *to attain*,
How poor would seem the planning and contriving
The endless urging and the hurried driving
Of body, heart and brain!

But ever in the wake of true achieving,
There shines this glowing trail—
Some other soul will be spurred on, conceiving
New strength and hope, in its own power believing,
Because *thou* didst not fail.

Not thine alone the glory, nor the sorrow,
If thou doth miss the goal,
Undreamed of lives in many a far to-morrow
From thee their weakness or their force shall borrow—
On, on, ambitious soul.

UNCONTROLLED.

THE mighty forces of mysterious space
Are one by one subdued by lordly man.
The awful lightning that for eons ran
Their devastating and untrammeled race,
Now bear his messages from place to place
Like carrier doves. The winds lead on his van;
The lawless elements no longer can
Resist his strength, but yield with sullen grace.

His bold feet scaling heights before untrod,
Light, darkness, air and water, heat and cold
He bids go forth and bring him power and pelf.
And yet, though ruler, king and demi-god,
He walks with his fierce passions uncontrolled
The conqueror of all things—save himself.

WILL.

YOU will be what you will to be;
Let failure find its false content
In that poor word "environment,"
But spirit scorns it, and is free.

It masters time, it conquers space,
It cowes that boastful trickster Chance,
And bids the tyrant Circumstance
Uncrown and fill a servant's place.

The human Will, that force unseen,
The offspring of a deathless Soul,
Can hew the way to any goal,
Though walls of granite intervene.

Be not impatient in delay,
But wait as one who understands;
When spirit rises and commands,
The gods are ready to obey.

The river seeking for the sea
Confronts the dam and precipice,
Yet knows it cannot fail or miss;
You will be what you will to be!

TO AN ASTROLOGER.

NAY, seer, I do not doubt thy mystic lore,
Nor question that the tenor of my life,
Past, present and the future, is revealed
There in my horoscope. I do believe
That yon dead moon compels the haughty seas
To ebb and flow, and that my natal star
Stands like a stern-browed sentinel in space
And challenges events; nor lets one grief,
Or joy, or failure, or success, pass on
To mar or bless my earthly lot, until
It proves its Karmic right to come to me.

All this I grant, but more than this I *know!*
Before the solar systems were conceived,
When nothing was but the unnamable,
My spirit lived, an atom of the Cause.
Through countless ages and in many forms
It has existed, ere it entered in
This human frame to serve its little day
Upon the earth. The deathless Me of me,
The spark from that great all-creative fire
Is part of that eternal source called God,
And mightier than the universe.
Why, he
Who knows, and knowing, never once forgets

The pedigree divine of his own soul,
Can conquer, shape and govern destiny
And use vast space as 'twere a board for chess
With stars for pawns; can change his horoscope
To suit his will; turn failure to success,
And from preordained sorrows, harvest joy.

There is no puny planet, sun or moon,
Or zodiacal sign which can control
The God in us! If we bring *that* to bear
Upon events, we mold them to our wish;
'Tis when the infinite 'neath the finite gropes
That men are governed by their horoscopes.

THE TENDRIL'S FATE.

UNDER the snow in the dark and the cold,
A pale little sprout was humming;
Sweetly it sang, 'neath the frozen mold,
Of the beautiful days that were coming.

"How foolish your songs," said a lump of clay,
"What is there, I ask, to prove them?
Just look at the walls between you and the day,
Now, have you the strength to move them?"

But under the ice and under the snow
The pale little sprout kept singing,
"I cannot tell how, but I know, I know,
I know what the days are bringing.

"Birds, and blossoms, and buzzing bees,
Blue, blue skies above me,
Bloom on the meadows and buds on the trees,
And the great glad sun to love me."

A pebble spoke next: "You are quite absurd,"
It said, "with your song's insistence;
For *I* never saw a tree or a bird,
So of course there are none in existence."

"But I know, I know," the tendril cried,
In beautiful sweet unreason;
Till lo! from its prison, glorified,
It burst in the glad spring season.

THE TIMES.

THE times are not degenerate. Man's faith
Mounts higher than of old. No crumbling creed
Can take from the immortal soul the need
Of that supreme Creator, God. The wraith
Of dead beliefs we cherished in our youth
Fades but to let us welcome new-born Truth.

Man may not worship at the ancient shrine
Prone on his face, in self-accusing scorn.
That night is past. He hails a fairer morn,
And knows himself a something all divine;
No humble worm whose heritage is sin,
But, born of God, he feels the Christ within.

Not loud his prayers, as in the olden time,
But deep his reverence for that mighty force,
That occult working of the great All-Source,
Which makes the present era so sublime.
Religion now means something high and broad,
And man stood never half so near to God.

THE QUESTION.

BESIDE us in our seeking after pleasures,
Through all our restless striving after fame,
Through all our search for worldly gains and treasures,
There walketh one whom no man likes to name.
Silent he follows, veiled of form and feature,
Indifferent if we sorrow or rejoice,
Yet that day comes when every living creature
Must look upon his face and hear his voice.

When that day comes to you, and Death. unmasking,
Shall bar your path, and say, "Behold the end,"
What are the questions that he will be asking
About your past? Have you considered, friend?
I think he will not chide you for your sinning,
Nor for your creeds or dogmas will he care;
He will but ask, "*From your life's first beginning*
How many burdens have you helped to bear?"

SORROW'S USES.

THE uses of sorrow I comprehend
Better and better at each year's end.

Deeper and deeper I seem to see
Why and wherefore it has to be.

Only after the dark, wet days
Do we fully rejoice in the sun's bright rays.

Sweeter the crust tastes after the fast
Than the sated gourmand's finest repast.

The faintest cheer sounds never amiss
To the actor who once has heard a hiss.

To one who the sadness of freedom knows,
Light seem the fetters love may impose.

And he who has dwelt with his heart alone,
Hears all the music in friendship's tone.

So better and better I comprehend
How sorrow ever would be our friend.

IF.

TWIXT what thou art, and what thou wouldst be, let
No "If" arise on which to lay the blame.
Man makes a mountain of that puny word,
But, like a blade of grass before the scythe,
It falls and withers when a human will,
Stirred by creative force, sweeps toward its aim.

Thou wilt be what thou couldst be. Circumstance
Is but the toy of genius. When a soul
Burns with a god-like purpose to achieve,
All obstacles between it and its goal
Must vanish as the dew before the sun.

"If" is the motto of the dilettante
And idle dreamer; 'tis the poor excuse
Of mediocrity. The truly great
Know not the word, or know it but to scorn,
Else had Joan of Arc a peasant died,
Uncrowned by glory and by men unsung.

WHICH ARE YOU?

THERE are two kinds of people on earth to-day;
Just two kinds of people, no more, I say.

Not the sinner and saint, for it's well understood,
The good are half bad, and the bad are half good.

Not the rich and the poor, for to rate a man's wealth,
You must first know the state of his conscience and health.

Not the humble and proud, for in life's little span,
Who puts on vain airs, is not counted a man.

Not the happy and sad, for the swift flying years
Bring each man his laughter and each man his tears.

No; the two kinds of people on earth I mean,
Are the people who lift, and the people who lean.

Wherever you go, you will find the earth's masses
Are always divided in just these two classes.

And, oddly enough, you will find too, I ween,
There's only one lifter to twenty who lean.

In which class are you? Are you easing the load
Of overtaxed lifters, who toil down the road?

Or are you a leaner, who lets others share
Your portion of labor, and worry and care?

THE CREED TO BE.

OUR thoughts are molding unmade spheres,
And, like a blessing or a curse,
They thunder down the formless years,
And ring throughout the universe.

We build our futures, by the shape
Of our desires, and not by acts.
There is no pathway of escape;
No priest-made creeds can alter fac

Salvation is not begged or bought;
Too long this selfish hope sufficed;
Too long man reeked with lawless thought
And leaned upon a tortured Christ.

Like shriveled leaves, these worn out creeds
Are dropping from Religion's tree;
The world begins to know its needs,
And souls are crying to be free.

Free from the load of fear and grief,
Man fashioned in an ignorant age;
Free from the ache of unbelief
He fled to in rebellious rage.

No church can bind him to the things
That fed the first crude souls, evolved;
For, mounting up on daring wings,
He questions mysteries all unsolved.

Above the chant of priests, above
The blatant voice of braying doubt,
He hears the still, small voice of Love,
Which sends its simple message out.

And clearer, sweeter, day by day,
Its mandate echoes from the skies,
"Go roll the stone of self away,
And let the Christ within thee rise."

INSPIRATION.

NOT like a daring, bold, aggressive boy,
Is inspiration, eager to pursue,
But rather like a maiden, fond, yet coy,
Who gives herself to him who best doth woo.

Once she may smile, or thrice, thy soul to fire,
In passing by, but when she turns her face,
Thou must persist and seek her with desire,
If thou wouldst win the favor of her grace.

And if, like some winged bird, she cleaves the air,
And leaves thee spent and stricken on the earth,
Still must thou strive to follow even there,
That she may know thy valor and thy worth.

Then shall she come unveiling all her charms,
Giving thee joy for pain, and smiles for tears;
Then shalt thou clasp her with possessing arms,
The while she murmurs music in thine ears.

But ere her kiss has faded from thy cheek,
She shall flee from thee over hill and glade,
So must thou seek and ever seek and seek
For each new conquest of this phantom maid.

THE WISH.

SHOULD some great angel say to me to-morrow,
"Thou must re-tread thy pathway from the start,
But God will grant, in pity, for thy sorrow,
Some one dear wish, the nearest to thy heart."

This were my wish! from my life's dim beginning
Let be what has been! wisdom planned the whole;
My want, my woe, my errors, and my sinning,
All, all were needed lessons for my soul.

THREE FRIENDS.

OF all the blessings which my life has known,
I value most, and most praise God for three:
Want, Loneliness, and Pain, those comrades true,

Who masqueraded in the garb of foes
For many a year, and filled my heart with dread.
Yet fickle joys, like false, pretentious friends,
Have proved less worthy than this trio. First,

Want taught me labor, led me up the steep
And toilsome paths to hills of pure delight,
Trod only by the feet that know fatigue,
And yet press on until the heights appear.

Then loneliness and hunger of the heart
Sent me upreaching to the realms of space,
Till all the silences grew eloquent,
And all their loving forces hailed me friend.

Last, pain taught prayer! placed in my hand the staff
Of close communion with the over-soul,
That I might lean upon it to the end,
And find myself made strong for any strife.

And then these three who had pursued my steps
Like stern, relentless foes, year after year,
Unmasked, and turned their faces full on me.
And lo! they were divinely beautiful,
For through them shone the lustrous eyes of Love

YOU NEVER CAN TELL.

YOU never can tell when you send a word,
Like an arrow shot from a bow
By an archer blind, be it cruel or kind,
Just where it may chance to go.
It may pierce the breast of your dearest friend
Tipped with its poison or balm,
To a stranger's heart in life's great mart,
It may carry its pain or its calm.

You never can tell when you do an act
Just what the result will be;
But with every deed you are sowing a seed,
Though the harvest you may not see.
Each kindly act is an acorn dropped
In God's productive soil.
You may not know, but the tree shall grow,
With shelter for those who toil.

You never can tell what your thoughts will do,
In bringing you hate or love;
For thoughts are things, and their airy wings
Are swifter than carrier doves.
They follow the law of the universe—
Each thing must create its kind,
And they speed o'er the track to bring you back
Whatever went out from your mind.

HERE AND NOW.

HERE, in the heart of the world,
Here, in the noise and the din,
Here, where our spirits were hurled
To battle with sorrow and sin,
This is the place and the spot
For knowledge of infinite things;
This is the kingdom where Thought
Can conquer the prowess of kings.

Wait for no heavenly life,
Seek for no temple alone;
Here, in the midst of the strife,
Know what the sages have known.
See what the Perfect Ones saw—
God in the depth of each soul,
God as the light and the law,
God as beginning and goal.

Earth is one chamber of Heaven,
Death is no grander than birth.
Joy in the life that was given,
Strive for perfection on earth.
Here, in the turmoil and roar,
Show wnat it is to be calm;

Show how the spirit can soar
And bring back its healing and balm.

Stand not aloof nor apart,
Plunge in the thick of the fight.
There in the street and the mart,
That is the place to do right.
Not in some cloister or cave,
Not in some kingdom above,
Here, on this side of the grave,
Here, should we labor and love.

UNCONQUERED.

HOWEVER skilled and strong art thou, my foe,
However fierce is thy relentless hate,
Though firm thy hand, and strong thy aim, and straight
Thy poisoned arrow leaves the bended bow,
To pierce the target of my heart, ah! know
I am the master yet of my own fate.
Thou canst not rob me of my best estate,
Though fortune, fame and friends, yea love shall go.

Not to the dust shall my true self be hurled;
Nor shall I meet thy worst assaults dismayed.
When all things in the balance are well weighed,
There is but one great danger in the world—
Thou canst not force my soul to wish thee ill,
That is the only evil that can kill.

ALL THAT LOVE ASKS.

ALL that I ask," says Love, "is just to stand
And gaze, unchided, deep in thy dear eyes;
For in their depths lies largest Paradise.
Yet, if perchance one pressure of thy hand
Be granted me, then joy I thought complete
Were still more sweet.

"All that I ask," says Love, "all that I ask,
Is just thy hand clasp. Could I brush thy cheek
As zephyrs brush a rose leaf, words are weak
To tell the bliss in which my soul would bask.
There is no language but would desecrate
A joy so great.

"All that I ask, is just one tender touch
Of that soft cheek. Thy pulsing palm in mine,
Thy dark eyes lifted in a trust divine
And those curled lips that tempt me overmuch
Turned where I may not seize the supreme bliss
Of one mad kiss.

"All that I ask," says Love, "of life, of death,
Or of high heaven itself, is just to stand,
Glance melting into glance, hand twined in hand,
The while I drink the nectar of thy breath,

In one sweet kiss, but one, of all thy store,
I ask no more."

"All that I ask"—nay, self-deceiving Love,
Reverse thy phrase, so thus the words may fall,
In place of "all I ask," say, "I ask all,"
All that pertains to earth or soars above,
All that thou wert, art, will be, body, soul,
Love asks the whole.

"DOES IT PAY?"

IF one poor burdened toiler o'er life's road,
Who meets us by the way,
Goes on less conscious of his galling load,
Then life, indeed, does pay.

If we can show one troubled heart the gain
That lies alway in loss,
Why, then, we too, are paid for all the pain
Of bearing life's hard cross.

If some despondent soul to hope is stirred,
Some sad lip made to smile,
By any act of ours, or any word,
Then, life has been worth while

SESTINA.

I WANDERED o'er the vast green plains of youth,
And searched for Pleasure. On a distant height
Fame's silhouette stood sharp against the skies.
Beyond vast crowds that thronged a broad highway
I caught the glimmer of a golden goal,
While from a blooming bower smiled siren Love.

Straight gazing in her eyes, I laughed at Love,
With all the haughty insolence of youth,
As past her bower I strode to seek my goal.
"Now will I climb to glory's dizzy height,"
I said, "for there above the common way
Doth pleasure dwell companioned by the skies."

But when I reached that summit near the skies,
So far from man I seemed, so far from Love—
"Not here," I cried, "doth Pleasure find her way."
Seen from the distant borderland of youth,
Fame smiles upon us from her sun-kissed height,
But frowns in shadows when we reach the goal.

Then were mine eyes fixed on that glittering goal,
Dear to all sense—sunk souls beneath the skies.
Gold tempts the artist from the lofty height,
Gold lures the maiden from the arms of Love,

Gold buys the fresh ingenuous heart of youth,
"And gold," I said, "will show me Pleasure's way."

But ah! the soil and discord of that way,
Where savage hordes rushed headlong to the goal,
Dead to the best impulses of their youth,
Blind to the azure beauty of the skies;
Dulled to the voice of conscience and of love,
They wandered far from Truth's eternal height.

Then Truth spoke to me from that noble height,
Saying: "Thou didst pass Pleasure on the way,
She with the yearning eyes so full of Love,
Whom thou disdained to seek for glory's goal.
Two blending paths beneath God's arching skies
Lead straight to Pleasure. Ah, blind heart of youth,
Not up fame's height, not toward the base god's goal,
Doth Pleasure make her way, but 'neath calm skies
Where Duty walks with Love in endless youth."

THE OPTIMIST.

THE fields were bleak and sodden. Not a wing
Or note enlivened the depressing wood;
A soiled and sullen, stubborn snowdrift stood
Beside the roadway. Winds came muttering
Of storms to be, and brought the chilly sting
Of icebergs in their breath. Stalled cattle mooed
Forth plaintive pleadings for the earth's green food.
No gleam, no hint of hope in anything.

The sky was blank and ashen, like the face
Of some poor wretch who drains life's cup too fast.
Yet, swaying to and fro, as if to fling
About chilled Nature its lithe arms of grace,
Smiling with promise in the wintry blast,
The optimistic Willow spoke of spring.

THE PESSIMIST.

THE pessimistic locust, last to leaf,
Though all the world is glad, still talks of grief.

AN INSPIRATION.

HOWEVER the battle is ended,
Though proudly the victor comes
With fluttering flags and prancing nags
And echoing roll of drums,
Still truth proclaims this motto
In letters of living light,—
No question is ever settled
Until it is settled right.

Though the heel of the strong oppressor
May grind the weak in the dust,
And the voices of fame with one acclaim
May call him great and just,
Let those who applaud take warning,
And keep this motto in sight,—
No question is ever settled
Until it is settled right.

Let those who have failed take courage;
Tho' the enemy seems to have won,
Tho' his ranks are strong, if he be in the wrong
The battle is not yet done;
For, sure as the morning follows
The darkest hour of the night,

No question is ever settled
Until it is settled right.

O man bowed down with labor!
O woman young, yet old!
O heart oppressed in the toiler's breast
And crushed by the power of gold!
Keep on with your weary battle
Against triumphant might;
No question is ever settled
Until it is settled right.

LIFE'S HARMONIES.

LET no man pray that he know not sorrow,
Let no soul ask to be free from pain,
For the gall of to-day is the sweet of to-morrow,
And the moment's loss is the lifetime's gain.

Through want of a thing does its worth redouble,
Through hunger's pangs does the feast content,
And only the heart that has harbored trouble,
Can fully rejoice when joy is sent.

Let no man shrink from the bitter tonics
Of grief, and yearning, and need, and strife,
For the rarest chords in the soul's harmonies
Are found in the minor strains of life.

PREPARATION.

WE must not force events, but rather make
The heart soil ready for their coming, as
The earth spreads carpets for the feet of Spring,
Or, with the strengthening tonic of the frost,
Prepares for Winter. Should a July noon
Burst suddenly upon a frozen world
Small joy would follow, even tho' that world
Were longing for the Summer. Should the sting
Of sharp December pierce the heart of June,
What death and devastation would ensue!
All things are planned. The most majestic sphere
That whirls through space is governed and controlled
By supreme law, as is the blade of grass
Which through the bursting bosom of the earth
Creeps up to kiss the light. Poor puny man
Alone doth strive and battle with the Force
Which rules all lives and worlds, and he alone
Demands effect before producing cause.
How vain the hope! We cannot harvest joy
Until we sow the seed, and God alone
Knows when that seed has ripened. Oft we stand
And watch the ground with anxious brooding eyes
Complaining of the slow unfruitful yield,

Not knowing that the shadow of ourselves
Keeps off the sunlight and delays result.
Sometimes our fierce impatience of desire
Doth like a sultry May force tender shoots
Of half-formed pleasures and unshaped events
To ripen prematurely, and we reap
But disappointment; or we rot the germs
With briny tears ere they have time to grow.
While stars are born and mighty planets die
And hissing comets scorch the brow of space
The Universe keeps its eternal calm.
Through patient preparation, year on year,
The earth endures the travail of the Spring
And Winter's desolation. So our souls
In grand submission to a higher law
Should move serene through all the ills of life,
Believing them masked joys.

GETHSEMANE.

IN golden youth when seems the earth
A Summer-land of singing mirth,
When souls are glad and hearts are light,
And not a shadow lurks in sight,
We do not know it, but there lies
Somewhere veiled under evening skies
A garden which we all must see—
The garden of Gethsemane.

With joyous steps we go our ways,
Love lends a halo to our days;
Light sorrows sail like clouds afar,
We laugh, and say how strong we are.
We hurry on; and hurrying, go
Close to the border-land of woe,
That waits for you, and waits for me—
Forever waits Gethsemane.

Down shadowy lanes, across strange streams,
Bridged over by our broken dreams;
Behind the misty caps of years,
Beyond the great salt fount of tears,
The garden lies. Strive as you may,
You cannot miss it in your way.

All paths that have been, or shall be,
Pass somewhere through Gethsemane.

All those who journey, soon or late,
Must pass within the garden's gate;
Must kneel alone in darkness there,
And battle with some fierce despair
God pity those who can not say,
"Not mine but thine," who only pray,
"Let this cup pass," and cannot see
The *purpose* in Gethsemane.

GOD'S MEASURE.

GOD measures souls by their capacity
For entertaining his best Angel, Love.
Who loveth most is nearest kin to God,
Who is all Love, or Nothing.
He who sits
And looks out on the palpitating world,
And feels his heart swell in him large enough
To hold all men within it, he is near
His great Creator's standard, though he dwells
Outside the pale of churches, and knows not
A feast-day from a fast-day, or a line
Of Scripture even. What God wants of us
Is that outreaching bigness that ignores
All littleness of aims, or loves, or creeds,
And clasps all Earth and Heaven in its embrace.

NOBLESSE OBLIGE.

I HOLD it the duty of one who is gifted
And specially dowered in all men's sight,
To know no rest till his life is lifted
Fully up to his great gifts' height.

He must mold the man into rare completeness,
For gems are set only in gold refined.
He must fashion his thoughts into perfect sweetness,
And cast out folly and pride from his mind.

For he who drinks from a god's gold fountain
Of art or music or rhythmic song
Must sift from his soul the chaff of malice,
And weed from his heart the roots of wrong.

Great gifts should be worn, like a crown befitting!
And not like gems in a beggar's hands.
And the toil must be constant and unremitting
Which lifts up the king to the crown's demands.

THROUGH TEARS.

AN artist toiled over his pictures;
He labored by night and by day.
He struggled for glory and honor,
But the world, it had nothing to say.
His walls were ablaze with the splendors
We see in the beautiful skies;
But the world beheld only the colors
That were made out of chemical dyes.

Time sped. And he lived, loved, and suffered;
He passed through the valley of grief.
Again he toiled over his canvas,
Since in labor alone was relief.
It showed not the splendor of colors
Of those of his earlier years,
But the world? the world bowed down before it,
Because it was painted with tears.

A poet was gifted with genius,
And he sang, and he sang all the days.
He wrote for the praise of the people,
But the people accorded no praise.
Oh, his songs were as blithe as the morning,
As sweet as the music of birds;

But the world had no homage to offer,
Because they were nothing but words.

Time sped. And the poet through sorrow
Became like his suffering kind.
Again he toiled over his poems
To lighten the grief of his mind.
They were not so flowing and rhythmic
As those of his earlier years,
But the world? lo! it offered its homage
Because they were written in tears.

So ever the price must be given
By those seeking glory in art;
So ever the world is repaying
The grief-stricken, suffering heart.
The happy must ever be humble;
Ambition must wait for the years,
Ere hoping to win the approval
Of a world that looks on through its tears.

WHAT WE NEED.

WHAT does our country need? No armies standing
With sabres gleaming ready for the fight.
Not increased navies, skillful and commanding,
To bound the waters with an iron might.
Not haughty men with glutted purses trying
To purchase souls, and keep the power of place.
Not jeweled dolls with one another vieing
For palms of beauty, elegance and grace.

But we want women, strong of soul, yet lowly,
With that rare meekness, born of gentleness,
Women whose lives are pure and clean and holy,
The women whom all little children bless.
Brave, earnest women, helpful to each other,
With finest scorn for all things low and mean.
Women who hold the names of wife and mother,
Far nobler than the title of a queen.

O these are they who mold the men of story,
These mothers, ofttimes shorn of grace and youth,
Who, worn and weary, ask no greater glory
Than making some young soul the home of truth

Who sow in hearts all fallow for the sowing
The seeds of virtue and of scorn for sin,
And, patient, watch the beauteous harvest growing
And weed out tares which crafty hands cast in.

Women who do not hold the gift of beauty
As some rare treasure to be bought and sold,
But guard it as a precious aid to duty—
The outer framing of the inner gold;
Women who, low above their cradles bending,
Let flattery's voice go by, and give no heed,
While their pure prayers like incense are ascending:
These are our country's pride, our country's need.

PLEA TO SCIENCE.

O SCIENCE reaching backward through the distance,
Most earnest child of God,
Exposing all the secrets of existence,
With thy divining rod,
I bid thee speed up to the heights supernal,
Clear thinker, ne'er sufficed;
Go seek and bind the laws and truths eternal,
But leave me Christ.

Upon the vanity of pious sages
Let in the light of day.
Break down the superstitions of all ages—
Thrust bigotry away;
Stride on, and bid all stubborn foes defiance,
Let Truth and Reason reign.
But I beseech thee, O Immortal Science,
Let Christ remain.

What canst thou give to help me bear my crosses,
In place of Him, my Lord?
And what to recompense for all my losses,
And bring me sweet reward?
Thou couldst not with thy clear, cold eyes of reason,

Thou couldst not comfort me
Like one who passed through that tear-blotted season,
In sad Gethsemane!

Through all the weary, wearing hour of sorrow,
What word that thou hast said,
Would make me strong to wait for some to-morrow
When I should find my dead?
When I am weak, and desolate, and lonely—
And prone to follow wrong?
Not thou, O Science—Christ, my Savior, only
Can make me strong.

Thou art so cold, so lofty and so distant
Though great my need might be,
No prayer, however constant and persistent,
Could bring thee down to me.
Christ stands so near, to help me through each hour,
To guide me day by day
O Science, sweeping all before thy power—
Leave Christ, I pray!

RESPITE.

THE mighty conflict, which we call existence,
Doth wear upon the body and the soul.
Our vital forces wasted in resistance,
So much there is to conquer and control.

The rock which meets the billows with defiance,
Undaunted and unshaken day by day,
In spite of its unyielding self-reliance,
Is by the warfare surely worn away.

And there are depths and heights of strong emotions
That surge at times within the human breast,
More fierce than all the tides of all the oceans
Which sweep on ever in divine unrest.

I sometimes think the rock worn with adventures,
And sad with thoughts of conflicts yet to be,
Must envy the frail reed which no one censures,
When overcome 'tis swallowed by the sea.

This life is all resistance and repression,
Dear God, if in that other world unseen,
Not rest, we find, but new life and progression,
Grant us a respite in the grave between.